

KARACHI

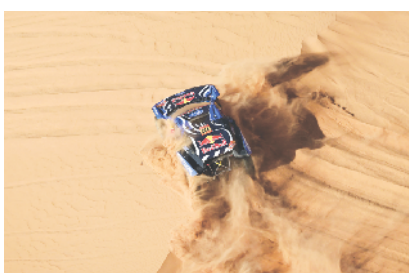
Sunset 06:03pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow) 07:17am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum 11°C
Maximum 26°C
Humidity 50%
Outlook Sunny

METRO

South



Variawa wins Dakar eighth stage

Pg. 18 SPORT

Two suspects shot dead in Mauripur ‘encounter’

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: Two suspected robbers were shot dead in an alleged encounter in the Mauripur area.

Special Investigation Unit (SIU) SSP Dr Mohammed Imran Khan said the law enforcers conducted a raid in Budeni Goth near Marwat Coach Stand, where an exchange of gunfire took place. As a result, two suspects, identified as Mohammed Bilal and Naqash, were killed.

Two pistols and a motorcycle were recovered from their possession, he said, adding that police obtained their criminal record which showed that they had been involved in murders and dacoities and had been arrested several times over the past few years, said SSP Khan.

‘Extortionist’ killed

Police claimed to have gunned down an alleged extortionist in an encounter.

Kharadar SHO Pawan Kumar said an encounter took place between suspects and a patrolling police party in Jodia Bazaar. After an exchange of fire, one suspect, later identified as Shahzeb, was killed, while his accomplice managed to escape. Police recovered one pistol from the suspect’s possession.

The officer said he was a member of an extortionist gang led by Jameel Changa. In a statement, city police said the suspect had sent an extortion message to a trader at Jilani Centre around seven days ago. He was also involved in delivering an extortion chit to a builder of an under-construction high-rise in Kharadar about two months ago and had resorted to indiscriminate firing, injuring labourers.



MUNICIPAL authorities chop down eucalyptus trees near Peoples Chowrangi. Officials claim they cut only trees that are foreign species. However, it is not clear how many local ones — such as gulmohar, neem, amaltas, etc — have been planted as their replacement.—Shakil Adil / White Star

Reduced gas supply intensifies cold-weather ordeal for Karachiites

• Several neighbourhoods have to make do without gas for four days straight as temperatures drop to single digits • Households turn to costly LPG cylinders • PPP senator seeks PM’s intervention • SSGC says shortfall from two fields reaches 45MMcf/d

By Tahir Siddiqui

KARACHI: The gas crisis that Karachiites have been facing for the past four days further intensified on Monday, as several neighbourhoods remained completely without gas, while other areas struggled with critically low gas pressure.

While office-goers, schoolchildren and other people continue to endure the cold-induced agony of a crippled gas supply, the gas utility concedes the problem, saying it experienced a reduction in gas supply from one more field.

City’s minimum average temperature remained in the single digit as the Met Office said it was 8.1 degrees Celsius on Monday.

Residents across the city said that the winter freeze had once

again exposed the complete failure of the gas utility’s distribution infrastructure and system, turning everyday life into a continuous struggle for them.

Public frustration

“How long will Karachi tolerate a utility that can’t secure its own supply,” wondered a disgruntled housewife from Gulistan-i-Jauhar.

A resident of Nazimabad, where gas supply was disrupted for hours, said that the gas utility offered the same tired narrative each winter, while the public paid the price.

“Until the company is held accountable, infrastructure is upgraded and the government stops turning a blind eye, Karachi’s residents will remain hostages of a broken system,” she

added.

As the temperature dropped to single digits, homes were left with cold kitchens and delayed breakfasts, forcing students, workers and the elderly to turn to expensive LPG cylinders — a short-term arrangement that only added to their financial burden.

Pakistan Peoples Party’s Sindh General Secretary, Senator Waqar Mehd, voiced deep concern over the ongoing gas shutdowns, loadshedding and dangerously low pressure reported across Sindh, especially in Karachi.

In a press statement, he noted that regardless of the weather, be it scorching heat or biting cold, Karachi’s residents continued to endure persistent gas cuts, erratic pressure and frequent

power outages.

“The prime minister should take immediate notice of the gas shutdown in Karachi,” he demanded and urged that strict action be taken against anyone responsible for the continued suffering of the city’s residents.

He said that even as gas supplies were cut and loadshedding persisted, residents were still being hit with bills running into the thousands, while the gas utility continued to fall short of delivering a normal, reliable service to the public.

The Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) announced that the utility had experienced a reduction in gas supply from two fields, which disrupted service to several parts of the city.

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Media restrictions hampering fight against disinformation, moot told

iVerify report states false narratives routinely used to undermine electoral confidence, discredit opponents

Dawn Report

KARACHI: A report launched at the Center of Excellence in Journalism (CEJ) at IBA on Monday said 2025 was the year when AI-led misinformation transformed the digital landscape with speed and magnitude of sophisticated deepfakes, false and misleading content never seen before.

Covering two years of misinformation, from December 2023 to November 2025, the CEJ’s fact-checking initiative *iVerify* Pakistan analysed 1,026 potentially false or misleading claims, of which 513 were

subjected to in-depth verification across politics, religion, conflicts and social issues, said a press release issued here.

Speaking on the occasion, CEJ Advisory Board chairperson Azhar Abbas said restrictions on mainstream media were compounding the challenge of countering AI-led disinformation.

“It is becoming increasingly difficult to fight misinformation when journalists are not allowed to put facts on screen. When mainstream media is silenced, the vacuum is quickly filled by unverified social media, anonymous platforms, and AI-driven networks,” he said.

The *iVerify* Pakistan project, launched just before the 2024 general election in partnership with the UNDP, identified politics as the most exploited domain, when false and misleading narratives were routinely used to undermine electoral confidence, discredit opponents, and weaken trust in institutions.

Major perpetrators of misinformation appeared to be the opposition PTI’s supporters, followed by Indian disinfor-

mation accounts. But the ruling PML-N wasn’t too far behind and accounts linked to its supporters, including government ministers, also contributed to misinformation, according to the report.

CEJ Director Shahzeb Jillani said AI is opening new possibilities in every field, including medicine, commerce and agriculture. “But if we are to counter the deluge of misinformation, the work of *iVerify* ought to expand, through partnerships across the media industry, academia and public institutions,” he said.

The importance of collaboration was echoed by Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, who acknowledged the growing complexity of the challenge and the threats it poses to destabilise countries and regions.

“Initiatives such as *iVerify* have played a critical role, showing that misinformation cannot be tackled by the government alone,” the minister said in a video statement played at the event.

“We are ready to support such credible and impartial initiatives to fight disinformation,” the minister said.

Earlier, IBA Executive Director S. Akbar Zaidi said it has become increasingly difficult to sift facts from fiction, when there’s a spike in news in times of conflict and civil unrest, such the situation in Iran.

He acknowledged the *iVerify*’s continued expertise in fighting misinformation and advancing fact-checking in Pakistan.

According to *iVerify*’s analysis, the spread of disinformation relies on deliberate tactics, including half-truths, missing or distorted context, mistranslation from foreign-language sources, impersonation of journalists and media outlets, and the growing use of doctored, synthetic, and AI-generated content.

Social media platforms — particularly X (formerly Twitter) — emerged as the primary drivers of amplification, while encrypted platforms such as WhatsApp remained largely unobservable, despite their known influence on public opinion.



CM Afridi visits Quaid’s mausoleum

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: On the last day of his visit to Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Khan Afridi visited the Mazar-i-Quaid and paid his respects to the father of the nation on Monday.

Accompanied by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leaders Salman Akram Raja, Haleem Adil Sheikh and others, the CM offered *fateha* and laid a wreath at the grave.

Talking to the media, CM Afridi said that visiting Mazar-i-Quaid was a moment of reflection and renewal of commitment to the ideals and values on which Pakistan was founded.

He reiterated that PTI’s political struggle is rooted in constitutional supremacy, rule of law and democratic norms, which, he said, were central to the Quaid’s vision for Pakistan.

Roadside encroachments must end to ensure traffic flow: SHC

Bench allows unsealing of eatery after petitioner submits undertaking to follow SOPs

By Ishaq Tanoli

KARACHI: While disposing of a petition against the sealing of an eatery, the Sindh High Court (SHC) has observed that the roadside seating and encroachment by any means are not permissible to ensure traffic flow, public safety and orderly use of public space.

A two-judge constitutional bench of the SHC, headed by Justice Adnan-ul-Karim Memon, also set aside the sealing of a restaurant in the Saddar area after petitioners submitted an undertaking not to encroach upon roads and operate within their lawful limits.

Citing the Karachi commissioner, district administration and others

as respondents, Advocate Saeed Khan had petitioned the SHC along with his brother and submitted that they owned a restaurant in Saddar and that on Jan 5, the district administration had sealed it “on the pretext of encroachment” during the ongoing drive.

They also alleged that an assistant commissioner along with his staff had physically assaulted one of the petitioners at the time of sealing the premises, forcibly made him sit in a police van and also confiscated mobile phones.

The assistant commissioner concerned also appeared before the court and submitted that the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) had been established pursuant to a notification issued by the competent authority on Jan 5, to regulate roadside seating by eateries and cafes to ensure traffic flow, public safety and convenience.

He also submitted that the actions were within the SOPs but the petitioners attempted to bribe

the officials. He said he was willing to de-seal the premises and return the mobile phone if the petitioners had submitted an undertaking to comply with the SOPs and refrain from further encroachments in future.

After hearing both sides, the bench in its order noted that under the SOPs, the thoroughfares were categorised as seating was prohibited on roads over 100 feet, commercial/secondary roads between 60 and 100 feet and residential/mixed-use streets under 60 feet whereas seating was allowed only with a No Objection Certificate (NOC).

To obtain an NOC, an eatery must apply with CNIC, trade license, rental agreement and undertaking, followed by a joint inspection by the town municipal officer, traffic police and mukhtiarkar, it added.

The order also said that the town officer forwards recommendations to the deputy commissioner, who grants conditional approval for one year, and the NOC must be dis-

played while it may be suspended or cancelled for violations, with repeated breaches leading to black-listing.

While reproducing the SOPs in its order, the bench said, “In view of the above, the roadside seating/encroachment by any means is not permissible to ensure traffic flow, public safety, and orderly use of public space. The petitioners have now submitted an undertaking before this court that they will refrain from encroaching upon public roads and operate their restaurant within the lawful limits specified”.

After the undertaking, it stated that the petitioners were expected to comply with all laws, policies and SOPs and accordingly, the sealing of the subject restaurant was set aside and mobile phone, if any, confiscated was restored to its owner. The Sindh government and the head of the KMC shall ensure compliance with the order forthwith without fail, it concluded.



EATERIES continue to have seating arrangements on the roadside, despite a citywide crackdown on “soft” encroachments.—Fahim Siddiqi / White Star